

**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES
NEWS RELEASE**



*Cora Campbell, Commissioner
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SUBDISTRICTS 4-6 COMMERCIAL SALMON OPENINGS

Norton Sound Subdistricts 4, 5, and 6, the Norton Bay, Shaktoolik, and Unalakleet Subdistricts, will have 72-hour commercial salmon openings directed on chum salmon beginning this weekend. The Shaktoolik and Unalakleet Subdistricts will reopen to commercial salmon fishing for 72 hours from 6:00 p.m. Friday, July 19 to 6:00 p.m. Monday, July 22. Norton Bay Subdistrict will reopen to commercial salmon fishing for 72 hours from 6:00 p.m. Saturday, July 20 to 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, July 23. Permit holders in all three subdistricts are limited to 100 fathoms of net in aggregate length and gillnets must have a mesh size of 6 inches or less.

Escapement counts of chum salmon have been very strong in all southern Norton Sound subdistricts as indexed by counting projects on the Inglutalik, Shaktoolik, and Unalakleet River drainages. Escapement needs have already been achieved and subsistence uses of chum salmon will not be jeopardized by these openings.

At current harvest rates, historical catch data indicate that the commercial chum salmon harvest in Norton Sound will range between 90,000–110,000 fish. Norton Bay's harvest of chum salmon this season is a record setting 26,000 fish and the season total should range between 35,000–40,000 chum salmon. The Shaktoolik Subdistrict harvest of chum salmon is currently 16,000 fish and will most likely range from 20,000–25,000 chum salmon; the 2013 harvest should rank between 13th and 19th best in 50 years of commercial fishing. The Unalakleet Subdistrict chum salmon harvest stands at 26,000 chum salmon and should range between 35,000–45,000 chum salmon by the end of the season. This would place the 2013 Unalakleet harvest between the top 5th and 13th best harvest in 50 years of commercial salmon fishing.

Good Luck and Good Fishing.